

International Alumni News University of Bayreuth

Issue II/2012



Alumni Launch Events in China and Kenya



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International  fice



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“My Stay in Bayreuth Was Wonderful”

Dr. Chandrashekara R. Haramagatti



I was born on 17 January 1977 in a village called Malligara, Karnataka, India.

In 2000 I completed my M.Sc. at Kuvempu University, Karnataka, India with Industrial Chemistry as my major. After my M.Sc., I was at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore, India working on a project concerning boundary lubrication. In February 2003, after gaining some experience working with surfactants at surfaces and interfaces, I moved to the Institute for Physical Chemistry at the University of Göttingen in Germany for my Ph.D. studies. The thesis was focused on understanding the structure, dynamics, and phase behavior of micellar solutions employing Raman and small angle neutron scattering techniques.

I completed my Ph.D. studies in November 2006.

After a short stay at IISc, Bangalore, in February 2008, I moved to Germany for a postdoctoral position. This time it was a small, beautiful place called Bayreuth.

I worked with Prof. Dr. Jürgen Köhler, EP IV, at the University of Bayreuth on a project sponsored by the Volkswagen foundation. It was an interdisciplinary project aimed at developing stimuli-responsive diblock copolymer membranes of nanometer size porous structures. My job mainly involved single particle tracking (SPT) in nanoporous diblock copolymer membranes employing widefield fluorescence microscopy to thoroughly understand the structure and stimuli responses of nanoporous membranes.

My stay in Bayreuth was wonderful, and I had a very nice time with my colleagues. I should also mention the support I got from the Welcome Centre. The staff at the Welcome Centre provided me, my wife and son with timely help in many ways.

After the completion of the project in December

2010 I returned to India and in February 2011, I accepted a position as “Manager-Technology” in the Research and Technology Centre of Asian Paints Limited in Mumbai, India. Asian Paints Ltd. is India’s largest and Asia’s third largest paint company and one of the top 10 largest decorative paint companies in the world.

India, November 2012

Alumni Portraits in the Next Issue

Dear Alumni and Friends

We would like to present our alumni and friends in the coming newsletters. We need you! Send us a short text and a photo of yourself, telling us what you liked about your studies or research, the city of Bayreuth, and the impressions you got during your stay at the University of Bayreuth.

2-3 of you will be presented in the next newsletter!

Send an email with your text and photo to
biac@uni-bayreuth.de

Arrival in the Middle Kingdom



University of Bayreuth Establishes Alumni Network in China

The University of Bayreuth launched its regional alumni network in China on 8 September 2012. The kickoff event at the Shanghai International Studies University was attended by 87 alumni from all over China. According to Prof. Dr. Stefan Leible, Vice-President for International Affairs and External Contacts of the University of Bayreuth, "China has been a region of emphasis for our internationalization strategy for quite some time". Dr. Arnim Heinemann, Head of the International Office of UBT, adds: "We are continually building strategic partnerships based on collaborations which have existed for many years."

The University of Bayreuth has four partner universities in the region of Shanghai alone and also cooperates with universities in Beijing, Qingdao, Wuhan and Chengdu. It comes as no surprise that several hundred guests from China have studied or conducted research in Bayreuth. "The new alumni network joins them together, links them to the University of Bayreuth for the long term and makes them ambassadors of the UBT in China", says Leible. The Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, which has already recognized the University of Bayreuth's alumni work with an award, is

providing financial support for the project.

In his opening speech, the German Consul General in Shanghai, Stefan Möbs, emphasized the significance of such university collaborations. The Chinese alumni of the University of Bayreuth were enthusiastic about meeting their former professors, Jochen Sigloch and Dieter Fricke, and reminisced about their studies in Bayreuth.

Future activities of the network in China will focus on regional further education workshops. The Chinese participants also showed a keen interest in an online job portal for alumni as well as homecoming events in Bayreuth.

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Translation: BIAC

A New Alumni Network in Africa



The University of Bayreuth founded its alumni network for Eastern and Southern Africa on November 5, 2012 in Eldoret, Kenya. Twenty-five alumni from all over Africa took part in the opening event at Moi University.

“Africa is a research focus of the University of Bayreuth and a strategic region of emphasis for our internationalization,” according to Prof. Dr. Stefan Leible, Vice President for International Affairs and External Contact.

The University of Bayreuth has 21 partner universities in 15 African countries. For this reason, a further alumni network for the region of Central and West Africa will be established in Lomé, Togo in March of 2013.

More than 500 guests from Sub-Saharan Africa have already studied, achieved a doctorate degree, or researched as Humboldt scholarship holders through the African Studies program in Bayreuth. It is a program rich in tradition, which is contributed to by scholars from all university departments and which is institutionally established within the framework of the Institute for African Studies, the excellence graduate school BIGSAS, and the Bayreuth Academy of Advanced African Studies.

“The system of international alumni networks that we are in the process of building brings together our alumni from all over the world. It also offers the chance for south-south networking which, through the activities and interactions of its alumni ambassadors in and between different regions, ensures that the University of Bayreuth is well-established and visible in the long run,” according to Dr. Arnim Heinemann, Head of the International Office of the University of Bayreuth.

The event in Eldoret is a part of the project Bayreuth International Alumni Centre, a program which has been awarded and financially supported by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. The founding event took place as a prelude to the workshop, “Opportunities and Chances of New Media: Utilizing New Media and Technologies in Research and Teaching,” which is part of a project of the DAAD Alumni Project for African Studies and the UBT’s Intercultural German Studies program.

At the start of the event, Dr. Georg Verweyen of the DAAD in Nairobi stressed the importance of long-term university cooperation with Africa. The African graduates of the University of Bayreuth were glad to be reunited with their Bayreuth professor, Dieter Neubert, as well as Dr. Ulrich Bauer. The graduates reveled in memories of their time spent studying in Bayreuth.

Regional further education workshops will continue to be the focus of future activities of the network in Africa. The African participants also expressed great interest in the Bayreuth projects SEED und VIATOR, south-south networking with other international UBT alumni, as well as the homecoming events in Bayreuth.

12th Summer University for Intercultural German Studies 2012 in Bayreuth

In August and September, the campus of the University of Bayreuth was once again transformed into an intercultural meeting place for students from around the world. 250 participants from more than 50 countries attended the Summer University in 2012. While studying German and getting to know people from other countries, they also learned to communicate in a new and intercultural way.

The Summer University, which has been organized by the University of Bayreuth and the "Institute for International Communication and Foreign Cultural Exchange" (IIK) for the past 12 years, combines language courses with regional studies and a diverse cultural program. It also offers specialized courses for intensifying expert knowledge, e.g. "Law and Judicial Culture in Germany" or "Business Communication in Germany". Students can choose a summer course program according to their individual interests. The cultural program includes sight-seeing in Bayreuth, weekend excursions to cities such as Dresden or Bamberg and hiking trips as well as a film and sports program in the evening. The visits to the "Markgräfliches Opernhaus" (cf. International Alumni News, Issue I/2012) and to Mödlareuth (so-called "Little Berlin") were two highlights of 2012.

This combination of language courses with a cultural program and the teaching of German as a foreign language with intercultural methodology is the reason why the Summer University enjoys growing popularity. Apart from the new language, the participants also learn about everyday life in Germany.

The demand from international students is high, as is the demand for grants. For this reason, the Bayreuth Summer University cooperates closely with the "German Academic Exchange Service" (DAAD) and BAYHOST.

Further information about the Summer University: <http://www.sommeruni-bayreuth.de/web-site/en/sommeruni>

International Summer School Programs in 2013

In addition, the University of Bayreuth also offers International Summer School Programs. For the upcoming year, the European Association for Sports Management (EASM) and the Graduate Program Global Change Ecology have already scheduled their Summer School Programs for 2013.

European Association for Sports Management (EASM) Summer School

From **May 17- 21, 2013**, the EASM Board and the University of Bayreuth once again organized the EASM Summer School for Bachelor and Master students majoring in Sports Management.

The focus will be on International Sport Marketing, an essential for all sports managers of non-profit and for-profit sports organizations. Participants have the chance to build up their own international network within the sports industry and to apply their knowledge of professional marketing tools in sports organizations in the future.

For further information, please visit http://www.campus-akademie.uni-bayreuth.de/de/kurse/EASM_Summer_School/index.html

ANIMOVE Summer School

The Graduate Program Global Change Ecology also offers a Summer School Program in 2013. It will take place from **August 11 - 25, 2013** at the Max Planck Institute for Ornithology, in Radolfzell, Germany.

The 2013 summer school will focus on interdisciplinary approaches linking animal movement, environmental factors, and conservation. It is strongly dedicated to combining theoretical knowledge with practical experience. Lectures and seminars will be complemented by daily hands-on work, using methods and practical conservation activities to provide a profound knowledge of spatial data handling and analysis. In the first days of the program, the technical workshops will alternate with practical field method exercises.

For the application process, candidates should submit the application form, their CV, a letter of motivation, and a letter of recommendation via the website before March 31, 2013.

For further information visit: http://www.bayceer.uni-bayreuth.de/gce/en/summer_sch/gru/html.php?id_obj=108257 or send an email to summer-school@global-change-ecology.de

New Audiovisual Studio

for Master's Program „Media Culture and Media Business“



Students of the interdisciplinary Master's program at the University of Bayreuth can now benefit from one of the best university audiovisual studios in Germany

The opening of the new audiovisual studio of the Department of Media Studies in Bayreuth was celebrated last summer semester after two and a half years of construction. 1.3 million Euros were spent on professional studio technology such as cameras, an LED lighting system, a recording studio, and a control room. Dr. Jürgen E. Müller, professor for media studies and coordinator of the Master's Program "Media Culture and Media Business" emphasises the practical benefits for students: "We put great value on opportunities for students to gather practical experience during the course of their education. The Master's Program focusses on audiovisual and digital media. The studio, for instance, enables graduates to make a film under professional conditions as their final project for the Master's degree."

The Master's program "Media Culture and Media Business", which was established in 2009, combines media studies, history, law, economics and information sciences. Through this unique approach, the program stays abreast of the increasing influence of media in our society while covering various media-related subjects. The focus is on audiovisual and digital media as well as the specific marketing management of sports media. The wide-ranging program, which ranges from the invention of print to the examination of current developments in the media, is meant to prepare students for a career as a media manager in a company or organisation.

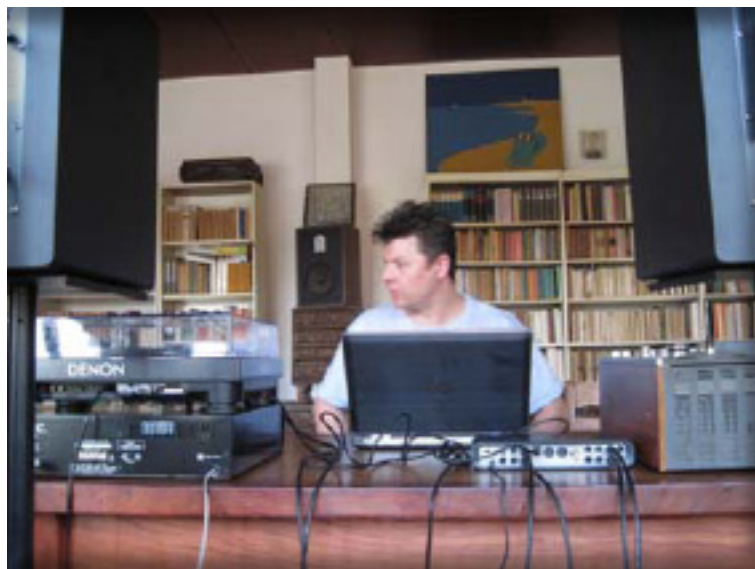
Research in the program, which always takes a practical and interdisciplinary direction, focusses on "networks". Phenomena such as social networks, microbusiness models and networked media companies are analysed from different perspectives of the five subjects included in the Master's program. Since 2010, the University of Bayreuth has also offered a structured PhD program focussing on "Media Culture and Media Business". The execution of exchange programs with universities in Canada, France and South Korea as well as the work of renowned guest lecturers from abroad ensure the international orientation of the program. Graduates of programs in humanities, politics and administration, economics and information sciences are eligible to apply for the Master's and PhD programs.

Press release 228 / 2012 of the University of Bayreuth
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Digitalization of the Audiotape and Record Archives of CRTV

(Radio Télévision Camerounaise)



Manfred Hübel installed the technical equipment for digitalizing the audiotapes

In this day and age of digital music it is becoming increasingly important to safely store sounds which have only existed in an analogue version up until now. The Iwalewa House (University of Bayreuth) is cooperating with the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Radio Cameroon on a three-year project for the preservation of cultural heritage headed by the music ethnologist Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Bender. Joachim Oelsner, one of the leading experts on Cameroonian music, is responsible for the technical implementation on site.

Since 1981 the Federal Republic of Germany has financially supported projects for the preservation of cultural heritage upon the request of the partner countries. During the course of the project, records and audiotapes in the radio archive from the 1950s and 1960s are being collected, digitalized, and made available for research via DEVA (the multimedia archive in the African Studies Department of the University of Bayreuth).

The CRTV possesses a unique and comprehensive collection of local Cameroonian music. It consists of recordings of traditional instruments as well as modern dance music of that period.

The audiotapes, records and rare gramophone records can be found not only in the capital city of Yaoundé but also in various radio station archives across the country. Usage and climatic conditions have left their mark on the tapes and records, which are in very poor condition. The aim of the project is to track down these recordings and digitalize them in an extensive preservation effort. Afterwards, the digital files will be stored in the DEVA database and made available for research worldwide. In this way, this unique collection of music, testifying to the cultural history of Cameroon, will be preserved for future generations.

This “rescue mission” for Cameroonian musical heritage has been made possible by the collaboration of the three institutions, and stands as a successful example of cultural cooperation.

After the completion of the project a compilation with a comprehensive booklet will be released bringing together the centerpieces of the archive and many prominent Cameroonian musicians. The radio station will also build a portal in its head office enabling visitors to listen to the music in its digital form. This new accessibility and the opportunity to include the digitalized music in regular radio programs provides an archive for the music as well as making it a vital part of modern global music culture. Apart from having a nostalgic value, the project is a revival of sounds from the past which are significant for modern musicians as well as music listeners and enthusiasts all over the world.

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The Reflection of Diaspora and Nation in Literary Texts

Alexander von Humboldt Foundation awards Prof. Dr. Peter Simatei's research project with Georg Forster research grant



Prof. Dr. Peter Tirop Simatei

Photo: Prof. Dr. Peter Tirop Simatei

Having received his PhD at the University of Bayreuth in 2000, he has returned from Kenya this year with a Georg Forster research grant from the Humboldt Foundation: Prof. Dr. Peter T. Simatei, head of the department of literature, theatre and film studies at the Moi University in Eldoret, has brought a new research project to Bayreuth. He is collaborating with Prof. Dr. Susan Arndt, professor for English and Anglophone Literature at the University of Bayreuth and senior fellow of the Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies.

From India to East Africa to the Western diaspora

The research project focusses on authors who live predominantly in North America and the UK and belong to a group Simatei calls "East African Asian Diaspora". Their biographies and family histories are doubly marked by migration experiences. Their ancestors came from Southern Asia, especially India. From the end of the 19th century until the 1920s Indian labourers were brought to East Africa by the British colonial administration as part

of the so-called "indenture system". These migrants worked mostly on the construction of railways. Later, free traders and businesspeople from Southern Asia would immigrate to East Africa.

The descendants of these Asian migrants grew up in East Africa, but are considered to be victims of minority discrimination after the end of colonialism. The politically independent nation states defined themselves using their indigenous African identity, leaving no place for the descendants of Asian immigrants in this postcolonial self-conception. In the 1970s they were even systematically displaced from Uganda. Many of them – writers and intellectuals included – found a new home in the US, Canada or the UK.

Literary texts as a medium of a new, post-national identity

This is the point at which Prof. Dr. Peter T. Simatei's research project is applicable. He makes the observation that the authors of the "East African Asian Diaspora" have a very well-reflected relationship with their East African origins. Their texts, whether they are fiction, autobiographies or travel reports, reveal the quest for an East African identity which goes beyond the concept of a nation state based on "purely" African roots. Rather than being a closed, finished system, the new identity concept is open to external stimuli and creative changes. It enables the authors to unite different identities according to their experiences of Western diaspora. They can thus develop a strong identification with their East African origins without resorting to the obsolete idea of a homogeneous nation state. Simatei is convinced that such concepts of an East African identity can become a cultural bridge linking the diaspora in the "West" to the African countries of origin. In this way, literary texts increasingly have the potential to help East African countries develop progressive concepts of national identity. In order to refine his research approach, Simatei keeps in close contact with literature and culture scholars at two interdisciplinary research centres at the University of Bayreuth: The Institute for African Studies (IAS) and the Bayreuth Institute for American Studies (BIFAS).

Memories of an award-winning dissertation in Bayreuth

With his research project, the Humboldt scholar from Kenya elaborates on reflections which were already present in his dissertation, "The Novel and the Politics of Nation Building in East Africa". The thesis, which was mentored by Prof. Dr. Breitingner at the University of Bayreuth, dealt with the relationship of literature and postcolonial nation building in East Africa. In 2000 Simatei received an award

from the City of Bayreuth for his outstanding scholarly achievements, after having received the DAAD award for excellent achievements of a foreign student the year before.

Press release 236 / 2012 of the University of Bayreuth

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Translation: BIAC

Coordinated by the University of Bayreuth:

The New EU Research Project "SIGNAL"

Universities and research institutions from eight European countries have formed an alliance in order to preserve the ecological services and biodiversity of European grasslands – despite expected climate change.

About half of all agricultural areas in Europe are grasslands. These landscapes provide essential ecological services contributing to the quality of life – such as the regeneration of groundwater, the filtration of pollutants, the storage of valuable nutrients, the provision of food for livestock or availability of regional green spaces for sports and relaxation.

The expected climate change in Europe increases the risk of extreme weather disturbing these ecosystemic functions to a great extent. Invasive plant species might infiltrate the grasslands and displace indigenous species while causing harm to plant species diversity. Such blows to biodiversity can make grasslands much less resistant to extreme weather. They would then be partially or completely incapable of fulfilling their eco-systemic functions.

Scientific fundamentals of prevention and efficiency control

Preventive measures, however, can avert or at least mitigate ecological damage caused by climate change. This is where the new transnational research project "SIGNAL" comes in. It will receive funds from the European Union for the next three

years. Prof. Dr. Anke Jentsch, professor for disturbance ecology at the University of Bayreuth, is responsible for coordinating the project. The project name hints at the practically oriented nature of the research. Using reliable indicators, it aims to determine in which way and to what extent grasslands in Europe are susceptible to disturbance. Based on the results, the researchers will develop scientifically grounded recommendations for action, e.g. for European or national authorities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or agriculture as well as forestry.

"The research results will form a solid basis for re-evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of measures that have been taken so far in environmental management and protection for the future", Prof. Jentsch explains. "In the face of changed weather and climate prognoses we must also develop new tools to preserve the ecological services of grasslands in Europe". Preventive measures are to focus primarily on three factors considered as a "buffer" against the consequences of extreme weather: Biodiversity in the grasslands, the nutritious content increased by nitrogen-binding legumes, and techniques used in agriculture.

Transnational research with shared responsibilities

The “SIGNAL” project sees the cooperation of scientists who have already contributed to renowned international research projects on climate change. They work at universities and research institutions in eight European countries. Apart from the University of Bayreuth, these include the University of Antwerpen (Belgium), the Bulgarian Academy of Science (Bulgaria), the National Institute for Agronomic Research (France), the University of Camerino (Italy) the University of Bern (Switzerland), the University of Celal Bayal (Turkey) and the Hungarian Academy of Science (Hungary).

The research, which is distributed across these eight countries, is supposed to disclose how drought periods influence the biodiversity and ecosystemic functions of grasslands in various European regions. The encroachment of invasive plant species is of particular interest. All experiments on biodiversity are being conceptualized and planned at the University of Bayreuth. The Ecological Botanic Garden on the Bayreuth campus, which enables researchers to simulate extreme weather, provides valuable support for this.

Organized knowledge transfer on the national and European level

From the very start, project partners will be actively committed to public relations in order to spread the word about their research in their own countries. Well-grounded measures to protect the grasslands can be taken only if decision-makers in politics and environmental protection are made aware of the research results. The collaboration with the Platform of National Consortia plays a key role in this. The forum consists of national consortia committed to



Prof. Dr. Anke Jentsch, professor for disturbance ecology at the University of Bayreuth, in the University's Ecological Botanical Garden

PHOTO: CHRISTIAN WISSLER

achieving national biodiversity goals in the project partners' countries. Contributing scientists of “SIGNAL” attend each national consortium alongside political and environmental representatives. These scientists take responsibility for the transfer of research results.

“All participants regard this transnational project as a great opportunity to develop reliable bases for an ecologically responsible use of grasslands in Europe. Our goal is to make sure that the research results are quickly put into practice. Together we want to contribute to the preservation of the beauty and efficiency of this typical element of European cultivated landscapes,” explains project coordinator Prof. Dr. Anke Jentsch. The University of Bayreuth is planning to host a kickoff event to launch the new EU project in January 2013.

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Award-Winning Research on Meteorites

***Prof. Dr. Ahmed El Goresy
has received the Leonard Medal 2013***



Photo: Prof. Dr. Ahmed El Goresy, University of Bayreuth

He has an international reputation as an outstanding expert for extra-terrestrial rock, and an asteroid was even named after him: Prof. Dr. Ahmed El Goresy has been a visiting scholar at the Bavarian Geological Institute of the University of Bayreuth since 2005 and has recently been recognized with one of the most prestigious awards in meteoritic sciences. The Meteoritical Society, which is the leading international scholarly association for research on meteorites and planets, decided to award Prof. Dr. Ahmed Goresy with the Leonard Medal 2013 at its 75th annual conference in Cairns, Australia. He will receive the award during the annual conference of 2013 in Edmonton, Canada.

With the Leonard Medal, the Meteoritical Society honours the scientific achievements of researchers who have made excellent contributions to meteoritic research. The award is named after Frederick C. Leonard, the first President of the Meteoritical Society.

Prof. Dr. Ahmed El Goresy studied mineralogy and petrology at the University of Heidelberg in the 1950s. It was there that he received his PhD in 1961 and completed a post-graduate professor qualification in 1970. Further chapters of his scientific career included the Max Planck Institute for Nuclear Physics in Heidelberg, the Geophysical Laboratory of the Carnegie Institution in Washington and the NATO Institute of Advanced Studies at the University of Oxford. His stays as a researcher, lecturer, and visiting professor in the USA, China, France and Israel are evidence that his scientific work is held in high regard internationally.

El Goresy was one of the few German scientists to be involved in the investigation of lunar rocks within the framework of the American Apollo and Luna Missions (Apollo 11 to Apollo 17). From 1983 to 1984 he held a visiting professorship as Fairchild Distinguished Scholar at the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena – an award received only by a few outstanding international researchers. The German Mineralogical Society has already honoured his research twice: He was honoured first in 1972 with the Victor Moritz Goldschmidt Award and then in 2003 with the Abraham Gottlob Werner Medal in recognition of his lifelong scientific achievements.

In the years following his retirement, from 1998 to 2005, Prof. Dr. Ahmed El Goresy held a visiting professorship at the Max Planck Institute for Chemistry in Mainz. In June 2005 he came to the Bavarian Geological Institute (BGI), an interdisciplinary research centre at the University of Bayreuth. Here he is conducting research on the chemical structures and characteristics of rocks from meteorites as well as terrestrial planets. He is particularly intrigued by meteorites of Martian origin which impacted on earth and can provide information on the composition of the “red planet”. “The technologies of high pressure and high temperature research at the Bavarian Geological Institute provide an excellent basis for investigating the structures and development of extra-terrestrial rock”, says Prof. Dr. Ahmed El Goresy, who stores some rock samples from Martian meteorites in his office. “There will soon be a new publication written in collaboration with colleagues from Switzerland, France and Japan. In the publication, we address the magmatic activity of Mars in its earliest geological history, as can be seen in a few Martian rocks. Meteorites will always be good for scientific surprises.”

Press release 277 / 2012 of the University of Bayreuth

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Translation: BIAC

Awards of the DAAD and International Club

Mohammed Abu Sayed Arfin Khan



The University of Bayreuth has honoured the outstanding young scholar Mohammed Abu Sayed Arfin Khan with the DAAD award 2012. The researcher holds a DAAD scholarship and is a member of the workgroup Disturbance Ecology headed by Prof. Dr. Anke Jentsch. With his research focus being on the effects of extreme weather events and biodiversity on ecosystemic functions, the awardee is making an outstanding contribution to the workgroup's scientific research.

His work centers around the investigation of droughts, strong rains, and changing frost, conditions which his home country Bangladesh faces almost every year. Mr Arfin Khan has gathered comprehensive research experience as a project leader and member. He will be conducting field studies in his home country from November 2012 until January 2013 and is being funded by Rufford Small Grants for Nature Conservation. Apart from his research at the University of Bayreuth, he also teaches at the Department of Forestry & Environmental Science of the Shahjalal University of Science & Technology. As a PhD student, he also received the award for the best lecture at the annual colloquium of BayCEER (Bayreuth Centre for Ecology and Environmental Research).

Born on August 1, 1983 in Bangladesh, Mohammed Abu Sayed Arfin Khan received his Bachelor and Master of Science degrees at the Shahjalal University of Science and Technology in Bangladesh. The title of his Master's thesis was "Climate change adaption and mitigation through community based agroforestry: Evidence from in and around two protected areas of Bangladesh". He headed the project "Community based climate change adaption in farming systems: a case study from Sylhet district, Bangladesh" in 2010 and has worked as a DAAD scholar in the group Disturbance Ecology of the BayCEER since October 2011.

Dr. Alejandro Baer



Dr. Alejandro Baer has received the University of Bayreuth and International Club's prize for 2012, which was awarded for the first time. Dr. Baer is an outstanding international scholar who has made essential contributions to research on the sociology of memory cultures, the cultural sociology of Judaism, anti-Semitism research and qualitative methods. Apart from his social commitment, which includes the establishment of a network against anti-Semitism in Spain, his research is of great importance due to its diversity and explicit connection to the sociology of knowledge. His research on anti-Semitism, the Holocaust and social memory (in Spain, Israel and beyond), which is complemented by his continuing interest in audiovisual methods of empirical social research, bears a strong and long-term significance. The dynamics of Dr. Baer's work are demonstrated by the quality of his numerous research projects and his publishing responsibilities.

Alejandro Baer is an accomplished young scholar who has very quickly achieved an outstanding position in social sciences at a German university in addition to finishing most of his education abroad. Dr. Baer will be completing his post-graduate professor qualification at the University of Bayreuth in January 2013. Born as a descendant to a Jewish family in Buenos Aires in 1970, Alejandro Baer grew up in Madrid, where he graduated with great success in sociology and social anthropology from the Universidad Complutense. During his graduate and PhD studies he completed semesters and research stays abroad at the Universities of San Diego, Leipzig and Jerusalem. After completing his PhD ("Video Testimony and the Shaping of Holocaust Public Memory") he held a tenure track position as assistant professor at the UCM in Madrid, which he gave up for a position as research assistant and lecturer at the University of Bayreuth. Since 2009, he has worked very successfully under the Chair for the Sociology of Culture and Religion. In the winter semester 2010 / 2011 and in the summer semester 2012 he held an interim professorship for qualitative methods at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität (LMU) in Munich. Since 2012, Alejandro Baer has been professor for sociology and director of the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies at the University of Minnesota.